

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

We are writing on behalf of HAVEN Free Clinic, a student-run primary care clinic serving uninsured adults in the New Haven community.

We write to you to express our strong and urgent support for legislation expanding HUSKY Health eligibility to all low-income CT residents, regardless of immigration status. This session, we urge the Connecticut state legislature to support expanding HUSKY eligibility to all children and adults ages 12-26, with the inclusion of funding for this program in the budget. We also wholly support expanding access to HUSKY and health care to ALL adults, regardless of immigration status, living in Connecticut.

The right to access quality, dependable health care is a human right. As a primary health care clinic, we have a collective responsibility to provide care for all patients, no matter their race, ethnicity, income, or immigration status. Without legal representation, pathways to reliable health insurance are nonexistent for many individuals across the state.

At our clinic, we have firsthand experience of the lasting impacts of inadequate healthcare coverage. Many of our patients require specialty care beyond the primary care we are able to provide but cannot receive additional services because they lack HUSKY coverage. Moreover, many face countless socioeconomic hardships, political barriers, and insecurities which compound the effects of lack of access to care. This produces systemic, long-term health burdens on undocumented patients who only seek medical care in emergencies when short-term interventions have been exhausted. This model for health care is unjust to our patients and undocumented immigrants at large, as well as unsustainable to the hospitals and other state-supported health care systems that ultimately serve such patients when illnesses can no longer go untreated.

These detrimental and unfair consequences are preventable. As health care providers, we understand the complex, traumatic, and harmful repercussions of restricting access to health care. We owe it to our patients and all undocumented immigrants in Connecticut to provide equitable, on-demand access to health care. Expanding HUSKY access to include all Connecticut residents regardless of immigration status will allow and empower many to seek the care they deserve. In addition, the state of Connecticut must allocate proper funding to sustain such a program so we can collectively create a more inclusive and healthy environment for *all* members of our community.

We urge you to expand health care access to some of the most vulnerable and marginalized people in Connecticut's community by supporting legislation that would remove immigration requirements from HUSKY eligibility rules. We thank you for your conscientious consideration.

Signed,

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